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NEWS RELEASE
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Bill Hayden M.P.

INDONESIA: MR HAYDEN'S STATEMENT

Following is the text of the statement issued by Mr Hayden in Jakarta on 8 April:

"This series of consultations was the first between the new Government of Australia and the Indonesian Government. There will be further discussions between representatives of our respective Governments.

Our aim is to enhance the generally good relationship that has been built up between us and Indonesia over several decades. We want a productive relationship based on mutual respect and one which is given strength by its ability to constructively resolve the inevitable differences which will arise from time to time.

It is in that context that present consultations have been undertaken.

We have never sought to evade the obvious fact that there have been differences between us on East Timor policy.

Many of those matters were directly addressed over the last two days.

In my meetings with the President, Vice President, Foreign Minister Mochtar and other Ministers both sides put their views frankly and clearly. I reaffirmed the need to maintain friendly and co-operative relations with Indonesia.

I noted on behalf of the Australian Government that Indonesia has incorporated East Timor into the Republic of Indonesia but I also expressed our deep concern that an internationally supervised act of self-determination has not taken place in East Timor.

What we do at the United Nations when this issue comes up in October is a matter we will attend to later, closer to the date of its proposed consideration by the United Nations.

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In the meantime existing programs, projects and exchanges in Indonesia will be maintained as we mutually explore our bilateral relations with the purpose of putting them on a firmer, more constructive and creative footing and seek to reduce causes for differences and misunderstanding.

In respect of East Timor our primary concern is to ensure that we do all that we properly and reasonably can to help the East Timorese.

In this regard, the following matters which emanated from our discussions are very significant.

Family Reunions

As you know, yesterday I announced that I had received an assurance on family reunion cases in East Timor.

I am well aware that there have been a number of occasions in the past when it had been thought that the matter of family reunions had been resolved but these expectations had not been realised. A further log jam occurred recently. And only 7 persons under the program have received the necessary clearances this year.

My colleague the Indonesian Foreign Minister, Dr Mochtar has given me an assurance from the highest possible level here that the program will proceed at a rate of 20 to 30 each month until the list is cleared. In fact the next 15 persons will, I am informed, be leaving shortly. This is the first time that an assurance from such a level has been given to any Australian Government.

Australian Media

I was advised by the Minister for Information of the Indonesian Government's agreement in principle to the establishment of a permanent Australian Associated Press Office in Jakarta. I also discussed prospects of other resident Australian journalists being allowed to establish permanent offices in Jakarta.

I was also assured that there would be no discrimination against the entry of Australian journalists into Indonesia. Visits by Australian journalists to Indonesia would be subject to the same rules and regulations that apply to visits by journalists from all other countries.

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I also raised the question of those Australian journalists who died in East Timor. The Indonesia Foreign Minister assured me that no new information had come to light since its earlier investigations.

International Aid Agencies in East Timor

I was glad to learn of the access which agencies such as the ICRC, UNICEF, and Catholic Relief Services have in East Timor. I understand that they have full and regular access. I informed the Indonesian authorities that Australia was actively examining the possibility of an expansion of our contribution to the work of international agencies operating in East Timor.

Parliamentary Delegation

I welcomed the invitation from the speaker of the Indonesian Parliament for a Parliamentary delegation to visit Indonesia in the near future. I have to convey that to the Australian Parliament on my return to Canberra. The Indonesian Government has made it clear that it could not accept a Commission of Inquiry from Australia or any other foreign country.

Australian Property Interests in East Timor

I raised this matter with Professor Mochtar who noted my interests and undertook to have the matter examined by officials. Our Embassy will be following this matter up.

Atauro Island

I was informed that a deliberate program of resettling those currently on Atauro was underway. I was interested to learn that a significant number, and that a specific budget allocation for these purposes had for the first time been made in 1983/84.

I also found extremely valuable the opportunity to hear at first hand Indonesian perceptions of the situation in our region of the world and further afield. Indonesia's membership of ASEAN, the non-aligned and Third World provides it with some different frames of reference to those of Australia.